

**55TH MEETING
OF THE
MARYLAND HEALTH CARE COMMISSION**

**Thursday, April 15, 2004
Minutes**

Chairman Wilson called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

Commissioners present: Chase, Ginsburg, Lucht, Malouf, Moffit, Nicolay, Row, Salamon, and Toulson

ITEM 1.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Larry Ginsburg made a motion to approve the Minutes of the March meeting of the Commission, which was seconded by Vice Chairman George Malouf, and unanimously approved.

ITEM 2.

Update on Commission Activities

- Data Systems and Analysis
- Health Resources
- Performance and Benefits

Chairman Wilson asked if the Deputy Directors had information to add to the written *Update* and they did not. At Commissioner Stephen J. Salamon's request, Enrique Martinez-Vidal, Deputy Director of Performance and Benefits, described the Commission's procurement process for actuarial services. Commissioner Robert Nicolay asked for clarification of the Commission's activities in disseminating reports via the Internet and through the U.S. mail system. Copies of the *Update* were available on the documents table and on the Commission's website at: <http://www.mhcc.state.md.us/mhccinfo/cmsnmtgs/updates/>.

ITEM 3.

PROPOSED ACTION: COMAR 10.24.03 — Maryland Long Term Care Survey

Chairman Wilson announced that Joel Tornari, Assistant Attorney General, would present technical changes to regulations that allow the Commission to conduct the Long Term Care Survey. Mr. Tornari said that the purpose of the proposed technical changes was to make minor clarifications regarding the survey data collection. Commissioner Walter Chase made a motion to approve the proposed changes, which was seconded by Commissioner Constance Row, and unanimously approved.

ACTION: COMAR 10.24.03 — Maryland Long Term Care Survey is hereby APPROVED.

ITEM 4.

EMERGENCY AND PROPOSED ACTION: COMAR 31.11.06 — Comprehensive Standard Health Benefit Plan (HSA-Compatible High Deductible Health Plan)

Chairman Wilson said that due to requirements pertaining to Health Savings Accounts included in the recently enacted federal Medicare Modernization Act, changes to the CSHBP were needed so that the Plan would meet the definition of a high-deductible health plan under that Act. Enrique Martinez-Vidal, Deputy Director of Performance and Benefits, discussed the proposed changes to the regulations for emergency and proposed action. Vice Chairman Malouf made a motion to approve the proposed changes, which was seconded by Commissioner Row, and unanimously approved.

EMERGENCY AND PROPOSED ACTION: COMAR 31.11.06 — Comprehensive Standard Health Benefit Plan is hereby APPROVED.

ITEM 5.

PRESENTATION: *Evaluation of the Maryland Hospital and Nursing Home Performance Evaluation Guides*

Chairman Wilson introduced the next agenda item. He said that MHCC has been a leader in creating performance evaluation guides. Last year, the Commission systematically evaluated and revised the HMO guide based on feedback from focus groups. Sharon Zeruld and Lisa Chimento of the Lewin Group presented a summary of the results of focus group research conducted on the Commission's hospital and nursing home guides. Some of the key findings of the focus group research included the fact that users responded very favorably to both guides; a majority of users had no experience using quality indicators to evaluate health care facility performance; consumers did not identify data as an indicator of performance; the terminology used in the guides is geared toward professionals; and users had questions regarding the currency of the data, case-mix and interpretation of quality indicators. Some conclusions from the focus group study included an indication that the guides may influence both health care professionals and consumers in making decisions; the language level and display are important factors in the utility of the guides; users desire a clear rating system, a rationale for the chosen indicators, and identified performance goals; and that both consumers and health care professionals desire individual and composite displays of quality data. Chairman Wilson thanked Ms. Zeruld and Ms. Chimento for their presentation.

ITEM 6.

PRESENTATION: *Maryland Trauma Fund Update*

Chairman Wilson said that during the 2003 session of the Maryland General Assembly, legislation was passed to establish the Maryland Trauma Physicians Fund to pay for trauma center on-call and standby costs, as well as to reimburse trauma physicians for Medicaid shortfalls and uncompensated care. Under the law, the Maryland Health Care Commission and the Health Services Cost Review Commission manage disbursement of the funds. Staff will begin to process applications for on-call and uncompensated care payments this month. Ben Steffen and David Sharp, Chief, EDI Programs and Payer Information Systems, presented an update on this activity. Mr. Steffen said that trauma physicians that practice at MIEMSS-designated trauma centers are eligible for reimbursement. In addition, Level II and Level III Trauma Centers are eligible for reimbursement for on-call expenses. Staff will process uncompensated care and on-call applications and will adjust payments to maintain solvency of the Fund. The Commission has awarded a contract to audit and confirm the accuracy of on-call and uncompensated care applications. Dr. Sharp said that Commission staff provides practice education seminars, application submission support, and practice information bulletins. Staff will provide information to the public regarding the Fund and will provide a status report to the General Assembly by September 1, 2004. The Fund Balance as of March 31, 2004 was approximately \$6.7 million.

ITEM 7.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION WRAP-UP

The next agenda item was the Legislative Report. Mr. Martinez-Vidal summarized the legislative activities that the Commission worked on throughout this year's session of the General Assembly.

ITEM 8.

Hearing and Meeting Schedule

Chairman Wilson announced that the Commission will hold a press conference at 11:00 a.m. on May 13, 2004 its offices at 4160 Patterson Avenue, Room 100, in Baltimore, Maryland in order to introduce a new obstetrics section to the Hospital Guide. The next meeting of the Commission will be that same day at 4160 Patterson Avenue, Room 100, in Baltimore, Maryland at 1:00 p.m.

ITEM 9.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:42 p.m. upon motion of Commissioner Clifton Toulson, Jr., which was seconded by Commissioner Jeffrey Lucht and unanimously approved by the Commissioners.